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provisional agenda*
THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST
QUESTION OF PALESTINE

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fifty-first year

Letter dated 22 July 1996 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation and the Permanent Observer of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit to you herewith the text of a joint Russian-Palestinian communiqué, adopted in Moscow on 19 July 1996 at a regular meeting of the Russian-Palestinian Working Committee on the Middle East (see annex).

We should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 33 and 35 of the provisional agenda, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. V. LAVROV
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
of the Russian Federation
to the United Nations

(Signed) Dr. M. Nasser AL-KIDWA
Permanent Observer of Palestine
to the United Nations

* A/51/150.

ANNEX

Joint Russian-Palestinian communiqué, adopted in Moscow on 19 July 1996

A regular meeting of the Russian-Palestinian Working Committee on the Middle East was held in Moscow on 19 July 1996 under the joint chairmanship of the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. V. V. Posuvalyuk, and the Secretary of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), Mr. Mahmud Abbas (Abu Mazin). The representative of the Palestinian leadership was received by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. E. M. Primakov.

During a detailed exchange of views on problems relating to the Middle East peace process, the importance of stepping up efforts to resume the Arab-Israeli talks on all tracks was emphasized. In this context, the constructive common Arab position agreed upon at the Cairo Summit is of great importance.

Both sides are convinced that progress towards a comprehensive and just settlement in the Middle East can and must be achieved on the basis of the agreements reached at the Madrid Peace Conference and in accordance with Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) and the principle of "land for peace". The full implementation of the Palestinian-Israeli agreements that have already been signed is the guarantee of further progress. It was noted, in particular, that, at the current stage, the task of organizing, in a stable and constructive manner, talks on the final status of the Palestinian territories was of paramount importance.

The Russian side expressed its full support for the policy of the PLO leadership and the Palestinian National Authority in favour of continuing the dialogue and interaction with the Government of Israel in areas of mutual interest, including within the framework of the full implementation of the Interim Agreement of 1995. Moscow views the development of Palestinian self-rule as a major historic step towards the realization of the Palestinian people's legitimate right to self-determination, which includes the establishment of its own State.

The Palestinian side expressed its great appreciation for the Russian Federation's role as a co-sponsor of the Middle East peace process, its positions and practical contribution to the efforts to achieve an Arab-Israeli settlement and to ensure stability and security in the Middle East. The PLO leadership reaffirmed its interest in developing political coordination and multifaceted cooperation with the Russian Federation, and in the Russian Federation's major contribution to the development of Palestinian self-administration and the settlement of the question of Palestine as a whole.

Agreement was reached on specific measures regarding the Middle East peace process and the development of friendly relations between the Russian Federation and Palestine.